

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONSUMER INDUSTRIES BRANCH
OF THE INDUSTRIAL DIVISION

Date: 22 November 1957

Area: Sino-Soviet Bloc

Subject: Light Industry, Domestic Trade, and Consumer Expenditure

Degree of Need: Standard

Note: a. The following requirements are a revision of RD C-1033, 27 April 1955, subject: Trade (Domestic), Services, and Consumption.

Note: b. The following requirements when separated from background and format can be considered UNCLASSIFIED.

BACKGROUND

1. The requirements which follow apply to all the nations of the Sino-Soviet Bloc. Priority should be assigned to those Bloc countries in which the status of consumer industries and the supply of consumer goods is currently or potentially of most serious concern to the Communist leadership.

2. For all questions, implied temporal reference is the current period and, if the information is important, any postwar year or prewar base year. For questions on consumer expenditure, implied geographical reference is any city or village with which source is familiar.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Light Industry

The following questions apply only to those persons with high-level ministerial or operating experience in branches of light industry, which include textiles, food-processing, leather and footwear, paper, and woodworking. Synthetic textiles should be given highest priority.

a. Describe the organizational structure and functioning of light industry, with special reference to:

(1) any current decentralization of decision-making authority to provincial and plant levels.

(2) degree of freedom allowed private producers.

b. Describe the way wholesale prices for light industry products are set, with special reference to turnover taxes and profits.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

c. Describe briefly the various types of production--modern factory, factory and cooperative handicraft, individual handicraft, and household--and indicate which types are included in official production statistics. Give the absolute and percentage importance of each type, and give where possible comparative figures for the postwar years and a prewar base. [The purpose of this question is to determine whether or not official production statistics overstate rates of growth in light industry because account has not been taken of a relative falling off of production that lies outside the statistics.]

d. Describe any current marked changes in light industry, such as major new products, important new investment plans, or changes in sources of raw materials.

2. Domestic Trade

The following questions apply only to those persons with high-level experience in domestic trade, such as former officials of the Ministry of Trade;

a. Describe the organization structure and functioning of the trade system, with special reference to:

- (1) differences in organization between urban and rural areas.
- (2) any current decentralization of authority to local levels.
- (3) degree of freedom allowed private tradespeople.

b. Describe the way prices are set at wholesale and retail, with special reference to turnover taxes and profits.

3. Consumer Expenditures

The following questions apply to ordinary consumers, such as wives of defectors, and should be asked only where the information is conveniently available.

a. What is the number and status of members of the household?

b. What is the amount and sources of income--including important fringe benefits and public subsidies--of the household?

c. What percent of household income is spent on; (1) food; (2) on rent and utilities; (3) on clothing; and (4) on other important classes of goods?

d. What are the prices of the most important consumer goods (give unit, quality, city and type of store, and precise date)?

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

e. What marked changes in living conditions have been experienced in the postwar years (plus comparison with prewar, if possible)? For example, marked changes in quality of goods or in availability of housing.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~